

The Polar Night.

THOSE WHO HAVE NOT WITNESSED IT CANNOT APPRECIATE ITS TERRORS.

Constantine Nossiloff, reporting his scientific researches in Nova Zembla, furnishes an interesting description of his sensations and experiences during the long arctic night, which began in November and ended January 20th. September was pretty comfortable, he says; then, suddenly, snow covered the mountains. The Samoyedes, his only companions, put on their winter clothing, the fishing boats set sail for Archangel, the ground froze, the sun lost its warmth and heavy snows fell. Winter had come in earnest. On the day when the sun showed itself for the last time, all hands went out of doors to bid it farewell. It remained in sight for half an hour only. For a few days longer there was a morning twilight. Then this faded and gave place to black night. The stars shone the whole twenty-four hours. The huts of the colony were buried under the snow, of which thick whirlwinds filled the air. The winds shook the huts to their foundations. Sometimes for days together the inmates of different huts could hold no communication with each other, though the huts were side by side. If any one went out he was seized by the wind, and had to be dragged back by means of ropes. In this darkness and desolation the aurora borealis did much to entertain and cheer them. It lasted sometimes for five days in succession, with splendor of color that Mr. Nossiloff tries in vain to describe. To enjoy the spectacle he used to remain for hours in a hole in the snow, sheltered from the wind. "I have never seen anything more terrible than a tempest during a polar night," says Mr. Nossiloff. "Man feels himself overwhelmed in immensity." When there came a lull in the storm the men ventured out to breathe the air and purge their lungs of the exhalations of the smoking lamps fed with seal oil. Twilight appeared again in the middle of January, and on the 20th the sun rose above the horizon, while the members of the little colony stood in line facing it and fired a salute. No one had died or been seriously ill, but all had the look of corpses and were as feeble as convalescents after a long sickness. Health returned with the appearance of the sun.

Great Power From Culm.

One of the most interesting and important economical problems of the century is about to be solved, and a practical solution of what seemed a hopelessly stubborn mechanical difficulty promises to give a source of power no way inferior to Niagara Falls. Two or three years ago the State of Pennsylvania appointed a commission to investigate the possible uses of the enormous quantity of culm or coal dirt that has been accumulating in the anthracite regions since first the mines began to be worked. This commission lately reported that the accumulation of culm amounted to 35 per cent. of the total output of the coal mines, making nearly 315,700,000 tons of apparently waste material. It is estimated that from this tremendous pile of coal dust, that has kept on growing since the coal mines have been in operation, there could easily be evolved annually 1,100,000 horse power. The Pennsylvania commission has been convinced by actual tests that this culm can be transformed into a portable and convenient form of fuel called aggettes by the manufacturers; and, of course, once this part of the problem is solved, the rest is easy. By a process, probably patented, the coal dirt is easily combined with crude petroleum, pitch, and some other material, and the resulting product makes an excellent heat producer, which is readily converted into electric energy. The Pennsylvania commission recommends that the state acquire the rights for putting the culm to the valuable uses of the aggette processes, and points out that in the Scranton district alone the annual contribution to the culm bank, now regarded as clear waste, can be turned into 75,000 horse-power every year, an energy nearly equal to that supplied by the famous electrical works whose motive power is furnished by Niagara Falls.—Illustrated American.

The largest country in one body and under one Government is the Russian Empire. It comprises 8,539,136 square miles.

Corpse once meant a body, whether living or dead. Many old writs are extant in which the sheriff or his deputy is commanded to bring hither the corpse of such a man into court.

About 250,000 canaries are raised every year in Germany, and, besides the 100,000 birds that are sent to America, the English market takes about 50,000, the next best customers being Brazil, China, the Argentine Republic and Austria, to which countries salesmen are sent with large numbers of birds yearly.

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B OBBY was told that descendants were those who come after us; and promptly applied the name to his sister's beau, who came to take her for a drive.

"Hasn't she wonderful dreamy eyes?" "Y-a-a-s," replied Willie Wubbles, "she has, indeed. Lawst evening when I called on her she could ha'ldly keep from going to sleep wight in my pwesence."

With her sweet, pensive face she came and sat beside her father.

"Papa," she whispered, "Alfred and I are two souls with but a single thought."

The old man stroked the golden hair.

"My child," he said, reassuringly, "do not be discouraged; 'that's one more than your mother and I had when we were married,"

A Suitable Epitaph.

"You want a plain, unpretentious stone, as I understand it," said the dealer in tombstones, after the chairman of the delegation has explained that a late arrival from Kansas had been accidentally killed.

"Right you are," replied the chairman. "There ain't nothin' in the case that calls for anythin' gaudy or imposin', but the boys feels that the deceased didn't mean no harm an' in consequence his remains is entitled to consideration." "Died suddenly, did he?" asked the dealer.

"Well, he wasn't jest expectin' death at the time he shuffled off, if that's what you're drivin' at," returned the chairman, "but there ain't no need of goin' into particulars, if it's all the same to you."

"Oh, I've no desire to pry into any secrets," explained the dealer hastily: "I was merely thinking of the epitaph."

"The what?" "The epitaph. You want something engraved on the stone, I suppose. It's customary to have something in reference to the most notable qualities of the deceased on the headstone."

"I reckon you're right about that," said the chairman thoughtfully, "but there ain't much knowed about the feller out here, 'cept that he was a reformer, 'cordin to his own story. P'raps you'd better jest put a line on 'somethin' like this: 'He tried to vote the Prohibition ticket in Red Gulch.' That seems to fit the case better'n anythin' else."—Chicago Post.

Preparing a Prescription.

"I noticed," said the druggist to his assistant, "that a gentleman came in with a prescription, and that you took it and gave him the stuff in about three minutes. What do you mean by that?"

"It was only a little carbolic acid and water," replied the assistant. "I simply had to pour a few drachms of acid into the bottle and fill it up with water."

"Never mind if you had only to do that," the druggist declared. "Don't you know that every prescription must take at least half an hour to dispense, or the customer will think he isn't getting anything for his money?"

"When the prescription for salt and water or peppermint and cough syrup is handed to you, you must look at it doubtfully as if it were very hard to make up. Then you must take it to me and we will both read it and shake our heads. After that you go back to the customer and ask him if he wants it to day. When he says he does, you answer that you'll make a special effort."

"Now, a patient appreciates a prescription that there has been so much trouble over, and when he takes it he derives some benefit from it. But don't you do any more of that three minute prescription, my boy, if you want to be a first-class druggist."

A Well-Heeled Tramp.

Probably there wasn't another person in Maine so well prepared for emergencies as a tramp who has just visited Saco and Biddeford. He had no overcoat, but as he wore two coats, two vests, two pairs of trousers and plenty of under-clothing he didn't miss one much. When he wandered into the police station he bore a big bundle consisting of a heavy comforter rolled in a piece of oilcloth. In his pockets were found several dozens of loose matches, a big roll of newspapers, two dozen railroad-time-tables, a box of salve, a bottle of insect powder, two harmonicas, a lot of cards, a handful of toothpicks, a shoestring, a wire nail, a collar button, a lead pencil and a carpenter's pencil, a box of indelible lead, an illustrated catalogue of rubber shoes, a purse with six cents and an old copper, three broken clay pipes, a new pocket-book, a piece of silk hat lining, two pieces of castile soap, three sea shells, a broken clam shell, a plug of tobacco, some fishing tackle, a spool of thread, a piece of wood, a paper of needles, a roll of birch-bark, a suspender buckle, a package of cigarette pictures, a notebook containing several sketches of Bar Harbor and vicinity, a chestnut, a whetstone, a dozen pieces of rock, a new whisk broom, a pocket comb and a big pewter spoon.—Boston Herald.